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14 September 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

Bob:

1. The threat outlook appears good enough to run to me. I would let the East European piece develop from the remarks of George Kolt and Fritz Ermarth, perhaps as a second piece. I am not sure we need the short piece on Central America for this issue. The President was briefed on the outlook on Thursday and the changes are not that significant. It seems to me this is a better version than the first one and, if possible, I'd like to get it out over the weekend for delivery on Monday.

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William J. Casey

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THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Council

13 September 1984

NOTE FOR: C/NIC

Bob, herewith a revised text, minus the big section on Soviet leadership, and meant to be crisper. Larry tells me that a [redacted] article on the same [redacted] question is underway and about to be run (?). This is fine with him; he feels the two pieces are not redundant, and would prefer that the [redacted] article be printed first.

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JF
Hal Ford

Bill - I think this
is pretty good.
RM

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National Intelligence Council

NIC Threat Outlook

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NIC TO 84-002

17 September 1984

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NIC Threat Outlook

Recent intelligence reflected in this Outlook points up (1) Soviet political and military responses to the US Strategic Defense Initiative; (2) the likelihood that East European efforts to expand relations with the West will persist despite Soviet disfavor; (3) an unprecedented dismantling of some Soviet SS-20s amid continuing expansion of the USSR's ballistic missile forces; (4) the development of the first full-fledged Soviet-manned military "base" outside the Soviet Union; and (5) the prospect of significantly reduced warning time in Korea.

These developments affecting the strategic future are taking place within the context of, and despite, a leadership crisis of major proportions in Moscow.

1. Soviet Responses to SDI:

— We have recently received reports that the Soviets are reallocating funds and redirecting technology research efforts to develop counters to SDI and to improve their own defensive systems.

they are part of a continuing campaign to generate opposition to the SDI in the United States:

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- One aspect of this campaign, spearheaded by Ye. P. Velikhov, has been aimed at undercutting the US SDI programs by claiming that they are technically unachievable. (Note that Velikhov is actually a major player in the Soviet high-energy laser weapons program.)
- A second aspect claims that the Soviets are prepared to match US moves in SDI and are developing countermeasures that will make it fail.
- A third aspect is a claim that the United States is upsetting the strategic balance and planning for a nuclear war-winning capability, and a threat that the Soviets will respond, including the implication that some day they will shoot down SDI space platforms.

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— These Soviet lines also employ what is becoming a favorite tactic: announcing Moscow's defense efforts, aspects of which have been under way for years, as if they were reluctantly begun in response to US programs:

- In fact, the Soviets have had a major effort to develop directed-energy technologies for many years. The high-priority Soviet program represents a massive long-term commitment of manpower and research and development assets.

- In particular, facilities for ground-based lasers [redacted] since the early 1970s. [redacted] probably have ASAT capabilities, and one is likely to be used during the 1980s for testing of ballistic missile defense. The Soviets' present claim that they expect to complete a "huge" ground-based laser within three years may refer to one of these facilities.

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— [redacted]

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- As a result of the US SDI, the Soviets have reorganized science and technology funding for their own "space defense," and have increased that funding fivefold.
- Soviet institutes have been asked to identify potential Soviet countermeasures against a US system, as well as technology programs to develop comparable systems. These efforts are to include matters of propagation; maneuvering and lift; and plasma, ion, proton, particle, lasers, or "anything else that was a directed source of heat 'except for nuclear.' "
- The USSR "has developed" a countermeasure against any US "star wars" system. This could be done, [redacted]
 - [redacted] (1) via the know-how the USSR "now has, not yet implemented," to cut infrared signatures (missiles plumes) [redacted]
 - [redacted] or (2) by making a "very small nuclear explosion in space" that could "negate" any IR detection system the United States might have.
- One of "the greatest technological problems" the USSR faces in creating any potential space defense system is optics: specifically the coatings, not the design or fabrication process.

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- The kinds of initiatives [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] reported [redacted] were probably selected 25X1 for their plausibility, and contain enough detail to enhance the credibility of the reports.
- [redacted] 25X1
- Whatever the case, the Soviets have doubtless taken some steps to refocus technical efforts to begin to counter SDI. These steps probably represent relatively minor adjustments to ongoing basic technology and weapon concepts studies. As such, they probably do not entail major reallocations of resources. Such changes, however, could help the Soviets position their technology effort for some major new emphasis during the coming 12th Five-Year Plan (1986-90).
- It is highly unusual for the Soviets to provide *any* information on their defense effort, much less explicit programmatic details. This passing of information/disinformation reflects a deliberate official decision: [redacted] would never have passed such information without authorization. The purposes of these moves are straightforward:
 - At a minimum, Moscow clearly wishes to convey its serious intent to match any new US military capabilities in space, and to imply that the United States will not gain any net advantage from its efforts.
 - Political disinformation is also clearly involved: to pass on data designed to play to different US audiences.

2. East European Efforts to Expand Relations With the West

Likely To Persist Despite Soviet Disfavor:

- Moscow's success in getting Honecker and Zhivkov to postpone their trips to West Germany is not likely to end East European efforts to develop economic and political relations with the West.
- The motivations that drove the leaders to make their opening to the West are still there and are not going to go away:
 - It is now widely realized in Eastern Europe that any hope for improved economic performance lies *not* in continuing to emulate the Soviet model or operating strictly within the confines of Comecon, but in loosening up the system so that it can interact and receive technological and—the East Europeans hope—financial support from Western countries.

- The desire of at least some East European leaders to gain stature and national legitimacy as leaders in their own right and not strictly as agents of Moscow will also remain.
- It is significant that it took high-level personal Soviet intervention with both Honecker and Zhivkov to get them to postpone their trips. This underlines the difficulties Moscow has had in keeping East European states from deviating ever more from Soviet policy:
 - This deviationism has been accentuated in the wake of the INF deployment. While Moscow wanted to proclaim and implement an Ice Age with the United States and West Germany, Romania, Hungary, East Germany, and Bulgaria refused to go along and maintained or further developed their ties to the West. Honecker and Zhivkov scheduled their trips to West Germany knowing that they would run against the grain of Soviet policy and maintained their plans to go despite growing criticism and hints in the Soviet press that the trips should be postponed. Finally, Moscow had to act at the highest level.
 - Ten years ago simple hints from Moscow would probably have sufficed, and indeed GDR and Bulgarian leaders might not have planned trips at all. Now, it took a major effort on Moscow's part and willingness to bear the blame for worsening East-West relations to get the job done.
- Whatever Moscow does now with respect to Eastern Europe is strongly influenced by the struggle for succession to Chernenko and by the parallel struggle of Soviet institutional leaders to control policy in their respective fields. Soviet insistence on postponement of the Honecker and Zhivkov trips demonstrates Moscow's (and especially Gromyko's) determination to call the tune in East-West relations. These and other measures to tighten the leash on Eastern Europe, together with the removal of Marshal Ogarkov, also suggest the strong desire of the Soviet leadership to avoid possible distractions and challenges as another succession plays out.
- The reactions of political circles in West Germany to the postponement of the Honecker visit give the West grounds for concern:
 - The Bonn government has tacitly accepted that it has suffered a setback but stated that the intra-German dialogue will continue and that it intends to follow that steadfast course. The

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SPD opposition, however, particularly its leftist elements represented by Willy Brandt and Karsten Voigt, have blamed Kohl for undermining *Ostpolitik* and are pushing for Western "reassurances" to Moscow such as declaring a moratorium on NATO-INF deployment.

- Kohl will not do this, but the Honecker-Kohl episode provides the East opportunities to try to soften up FRG attitudes, and could result in somewhat less cooperative FRG policies with the United States, at least for a while.

3. Some Unprecedented SS-20 Dismantlement, but Continued Major Expansion of the Soviets' Ballistic Missile Force:

— [redacted] the Soviets have dismantled one of the five SS-20 bases [redacted] [redacted] and that dismantlement of the other four bases there may occur soon. Dismantlement of operational SS-20 facilities is unprecedented.

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— At the same time, however, the SS-20 force elsewhere continues its major expansion, and the overall Soviet ballistic missile program continues its impressive quantitative and qualitative expansion. Therefore [redacted] dismantlement is intriguing, but not highly significant:

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- The Soviets have made and are continuing to make a very big investment in their mobile IRBM force; construction rates for new bases now match the peak historical rate of 1980.

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- We expect the number of SS-20 launchers deployed at bases to grow [redacted] in the next several years, probably with about one refire missile for each SS-20 the Soviets deploy.

- The Soviets are also preparing to flight-test a follow-on to the SS-20 which is likely to replace most or all of the SS-20s, beginning in 1986-87.

- Most important, we are observing a profound Soviet commitment to mobile strategic missiles, including additional SS-20s, SS-X-25 mobile ICBMs, and rail-mobile SS-X-24 ICBMs, as well as probably mobile GLCMs. Construction has already begun at [redacted] SS-X-25 bases [redacted]

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— We are uncertain as to why the Soviets are taking the dismantling action [redacted]

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- A likely explanation is that they plan to convert this division for use by their new SS-X-25 mobile ICBM, which should become operational next year.

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- Less likely possibilities are that preparations are under way for the eventual deployment of a follow-on to the SS-20, although the timing seems wrong, or that the dismantlement could be a temporary measure to carry out repairs or renovations at the bases.

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4. The First Soviet Overseas Military Base—At Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam:

- At present, the Soviets have nailed down at Cam Ranh* what is in fact the first true overseas Soviet base, even though Hanoi still strongly denies that the Soviets have any "bases" in Vietnam.
- Cam Ranh is now a unilateral Soviet base, complete with a Soviet naval infantry security detachment, and supported by [redacted] logistic facilities. This is the only such overseas Soviet operational military base in the world.
- Soviet naval strength in the area has averaged four submarines, two to three surface combatants, and 15 auxiliaries, on a rotational basis. A Bear maritime patrol contingent has grown to a composite squadron [redacted]. Starting in 1983 and continuing this year, a composite squadron of nine Badgers has arrived [redacted] the only Soviet bombers based outside the USSR's defense periphery. [redacted]

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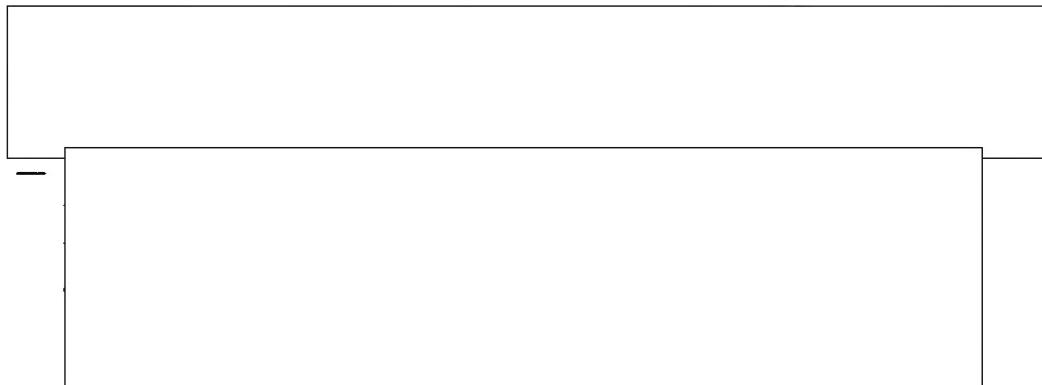
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* It was at Cam Ranh Bay, incidentally, that the Russian fleet coaled in 1905 before its disastrous sea battle with the Japanese in the Tsushima Strait.

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- We do not know the purposes of these Soviet actions concerning Cam Ranh, or how these developments affect the Soviet-Vietnamese relationship. Certainly these actions are part of a gradual but far-reaching Soviet power-projection effort in the area, which furthers the purposes of:
 - Encircling China.
 - Backing up Vietnamese and Soviet influence in Southeast Asia.
 - Matching US military presence and access in the area, specifically that out of Subic Bay.
 - Putting Soviet forces astride Japan's routes to/from the Persian Gulf, and US routes to the Gulf.
 - Enhancing the USSR's superpower image.

5.

Warning Time of North Korean Attack:

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Threat Outlook

New Problems That May Arise for the US Government in Ongoing World Trouble Spots in Months Ahead



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New Problems That May Arise for the US Government in Ongoing World Trouble Spots in Months Ahead

This report focuses especially on those ongoing major trouble spots where there is greatest reasonable chance over the next few months that various US adversaries might seek to exploit those situations—in the belief that constraints attending our election period might complicate effective US policy response to those situations, and so improve the longer term positions there of the USSR, Cuba, or other adversaries. This report also briefly specifies other troubles which may arise in any event during the US election period. The list of cases discussed in this report purposely excludes the many world crises which might arise but either are unlikely to occur, or would not necessarily be of profound significance for US interests if they did. Those potential new problems discussed below will be given especially close scrutiny by the Intelligence Community in coming weeks to allow detection and alerts as early as possible.

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[redacted] we consider that the USSR is not prepared to provoke extreme confrontations, but is interested through less risky actions in exploiting near-term opportunities. The Soviet hand will in some instances be direct. In others, the chief actor will be Cuba or some other adversary, with the Soviet role backstage or minimal. And, still other new troubles can develop on their own.

The most likely threat in coming weeks remains a fall offensive by the Salvadoran insurgents. [redacted]

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Difficult problems will arise if Nicaragua receives jet combat aircraft (L-39s) from Libya: [redacted]

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- The Sandinistas meanwhile have begun to practice intercepts of hostile aircraft with the aid of new Soviet radars. The Nicaraguan radar inventory has expanded rapidly with the deployment recently of additional Soviet Flat Face early warning and Odd Pair height-finding radars. These can provide the basis for an expanded air defense system which would enable the Sandinistas to intercept aerial reconnaissance or airborne supplies to resistance forces in Nicaragua. The range of these radars, under ideal conditions, could extend 100 miles or so into Honduras or Costa Rica.
- Moscow almost certainly is at least aware of these developments. By sponsoring or winking at the deployment of L-39s in Nicaragua, the Soviets are testing what the traffic will bear. Their belief: that the unique nature of these aircraft makes them an ambiguous case for the US Government to counter, in contrast to MIGs; that US interests might suffer whether the US response to the L-39s were mild or strong.

The most difficult new problems that are likely to face the US Government between now and the end of the year, however, arise from heightened Soviet and Indian pressures against Pakistan:

- Even now both Moscow and New Delhi are exerting increased pressures against Pakistan. These will almost certainly increase in coming weeks.

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The Indian Foreign Secretary has [redacted]
[redacted] that the deterioration in relations with Pakistan would not
lead to armed conflict. [redacted]

- Although evidence is slight, we believe that New Delhi is at least giving consideration to the possibility of launching a strike against Pakistan's nuclear facilities.
- The Soviet and Indian pressures are separately driven, but converge in certain respects.
 - The Soviets are increasingly frustrated over Afghanistan, want to end Pakistani assistance to resistance groups there, and seem to be searching for some new means of effecting this.
 - The Indians are especially concerned about Pakistan's nuclear program. They are uneasy over the growth of Pakistan's US-supported overall military strength. They see the continuing insurgency in Afghanistan as the primary cause of vastly increased Western economic and military support to Pakistan. Also, the Indian Foreign Secretary has told [redacted]
[redacted] that New Delhi has solid evidence of Pakistani support, including arms, for Sikh extremists.
 - The Soviets and the Indians share a desire to bring Zia down. We know that the Soviets are attempting to heighten Indian concerns over Pakistan. Also, that the Soviets seek to mount joint subversive attempts to destabilize Pakistan.
- These Indian and Soviet pressures against Pakistan do not spring principally from desires to embarrass the US Government. Moscow's leaders nonetheless doubtless believe that heightened pressures against Pakistan will make it difficult for the United

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States to frustrate Soviet and Indian efforts to unseat Zia. In the Soviet view, Pakistan is far from the United States, Moscow's hand could be somewhat hidden in certain cases, and US concerns over nuclear proliferation might create some ambivalence in Washington in the event Indian military action against Pakistan included strikes on its nuclear facilities.

- For their part, the Pakistanis are being careful not to provoke Moscow, although they will doubtless continue to hang tough regarding Afghanistan. Pakistani capabilities to counter Soviet, "Afghan," or Indian air attacks would be good if they had advance warning. Their ability is poor, however, to detect actual attacks early on. Their presently deployed forces would be no match against attacking forces from India.

There are certain other situations that are somewhat less likely to develop than the above, but cannot be excluded and could be of considerable significance to US interests should they arise. The chief such cases:

Escalation of Soviet pressures on Berlin:

- At the present time Moscow is taking certain harassing measures possibly designed to remind the United States and the Europeans (including the German Democratic Republic) of Soviet leverage over the existence of tranquillity in Central Europe. These harassments concern the air corridors and ground traffic, and access to certain Permanently Restricted Areas (on the ground) in East Germany.
- Any more intense pressures would almost certainly be applied gradually, however, and with care to test Western reactions at relatively low risk.

An expanded Persian Gulf crisis:

- The most likely source of new trouble would be Iraqi attacks in the Gulf which substantially reduced Iranian oil production, followed by Iranian reprisal attacks on key oil facilities in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.
- Free world oil supplies could suffer, but only if such Iranian attacks succeeded in sharply curtailing Saudi oil production.

An attempt by Cuban-sponsored leftists to gain primary influence in Bolivia:

- Pro-Cuban elements continue to gain influence in President Siles' political party and in Bolivia's Ministry of Interior. They might attempt to seize predominant power in coming months.

- [redacted]
- It is more likely, however, that they will continue to play it cool. They are aware of the superior power of the conservative military, and of the prospect of possibly greatly increasing pro-Cuban influence through more measured action over the longer run.

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